

THE BEREAN

"...EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY..." (Acts 17:11)

JUDGMENT WITHOUT MERCY

*A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES
PART TWENTY SEVEN OF SIXTY FOUR*

The God of heaven is a merciful God. Israel sang, "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever" {Psalm 136:1). Were not God a merciful God, we could not be saved. Salvation is ours "not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy" (Titus 3:5). God is "rich in mercy" (Ephesians 2:4). Yet we read, "For judgment is without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy: mercy glorieth against judgment" (James 2:13).

James had discussed the "callous treatment meted out to the poor man in the service" as a "manifestation of the merciless spirit" (Ross). From this he turned to a discussion of human harshness in general. Not only should our attitude toward the poor be one of mercy and compassion, but our whole lives should be filled with mercy. James' words remind us of some statements from the Lord.

Jesus warned, "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you" (Mt. 7:2). For the man who has shown no mercy or compassion on others, God will show none to him. The man who cannot refrain from condemning will be condemned. If we do not forgive those who sin against us, we will not be forgiven by Christ (Mt 6:15). Our debt to God is so vast that only His mercy and grace can remove it. If we cannot in turn forget the trifling things done against us by others, God's mercy is not ours. Read the story Jesus told in Mt. 18:21-35. Jesus pictures judgment for us in Matthew 25. Those who enter the joy of heaven are told, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me" (Mt. 25: 40). Those who were lost were told, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me" (Mt. 25: 45). When giving the model prayer He said, "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Mt. 6:12).

While "judgment is without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy," the merciful will obtain mercy (Mt. 5:7).

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